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S E C R E T ANKARA 004713

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE AND NEA/I

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/18/2014

TAGS: [PTER](#) [IZ](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: EMPLOYER OF TURKISH HOSTAGE IN IRAQ SAYS IT WILL PUBLICLY COMPLY WITH TERRORISTS' PULLOUT DEMAND BUT WILL GO BACK UNDER ANOTHER NAME

REF: ANKARA 4600 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ERIC S. EDELMAN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

1. (C) Ali Kantur, CEO of Turkey's TEPE group--a significant KBR subcontractor in Iraq--and Deputy General Manager Suleyman Son, met with Ambassador and Emboffs August 19 to discuss TEPE's security problems in Iraq. Kantur and Son passed on that the Turkish TV station NTV reported at noon today that one of TEPE Group's employees who was taken hostage in Iraq three weeks ago, Aytullah Gezmen, has now appeared in a videocassette made available to Ihlas News Agency, saying he would be killed by his captors in 72 hours if TEPE group did not withdraw from Iraq. Gezmen was kidnapped along with fellow Bilintur (a subsidiary of TEPE) employee Murat Yuce who was subsequently killed by the kidnappers. At the time, the kidnappers called on Bilintur to pull out of Iraq and Bilintur, which was performing laundry services for the US military, had complied.

2. (S) Kantur said that now that the terrorists are calling on TEPE itself--rather than just Bilintur--to pull out, TEPE will make an announcement that it is doing so, in the hope it will spare Gezmen's life. When reminded about the danger of acceding to terrorist demands, Kantur was at pains to reiterate in the strongest possible terms that, in fact, TEPE had no intention of pulling out of Iraq now but would continue operations in Iraq under another name. Kantur and Son noted that the terrorists seem to have pinpointed the whereabouts of their group's employees in Iraq such that the employees, having pulled back from Falluja to Baghdad, had to move into the Green Zone.

3. (Sbu) Post will report septel on other topics raised in the meeting.

4. (U) Baghdad minimized considered.
EDELMAN